

Water Safety Bingo

TOPIC/SUBJECT: Water Safety

TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL: Elementary School

TIME: 20-30 minutes

THEME: Knowing basic boating safety principles could save your life.

GOAL/PURPOSE: Participants will learn about water safety equipment.

OBJECTIVE(S): Participants will be able to recognize water safety equipment and know how it is used.

DESCRIPTION:

- A. Pass out bingo cards and game markers to students.
- B. The instructor should select from the stack of picture cards (which correspond to the pictures on the students' bingo cards) and hold it up for the students to see. Students may cover that picture on their bingo card with a game marker. The instructor should then discuss the water safety practice pertaining to the picture from the discussion notes below.
- C. Continue until a student attains a 'Bingo.' Have students remove game markers and start over until all the picture cards have been used.
- D. To conclude and review students, play a final round of 'Black-out Bingo,' calling on students to discuss the picture cards as they are drawn.
- E. Pass out water safety decals to all students.

PICTURE CARD DISCUSSION:

- 1 **LADY HOLDING ONTO CAPSIZED BOAT** - Emphasize that if a boat they are in would capsize, they should stay with the boat rather than trying to swim to shore. Distances are hard to judge on the water and one can easily become exhausted before reaching what looked like a close shore. Most boats have built in flotation that allows the boat to continue floating after swamping or capsizing and it is much easier for rescuers to spot a boat in trouble rather than an individual.
- 2 **DIVER FLAG** - If you spot this red and white flag while on the lake, it means that a scuba diver is beneath the water surface in that area. To protect the diver from serious injury, make sure the boat you are in stays at least 100 feet away from the flag.
- 3 **PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE or LIFE JACKET**- Remind students that more than half of the people who drown didn't intend to ever be in the water, so it's very important to always wear a life jacket when in a boat or near the water. You never know when an accident may happen.
4. **OAR** - Oars can be a lifesaver in more ways than one. Discuss the importance of carrying oars on all boats in case the boat motor should stall when out on the lake. Ask the group if they can think of another use for oars. Remind them that oars can be used as a lifesaving device in case someone is drowning. The oar can be held out to the drowning person to help pull the individual to safety.
5. **BOATS KEEP OUT BUOY** - Buoys on the lake have the same purpose as traffic signs on land. They let a boater know when to slow down, hazardous areas to steer clear of, or areas in which they're not allowed. While on the lake, you might spot Boats Keep Out Buoys around the swimming beach areas. For the swimmer's safety, boats must stay on the outside of these buoy markers.

6. FIRE EXTINGUISHER - Explain that a fire extinguisher is an important piece of safety equipment to have on a boat. A fire can happen at anytime so extinguishers should be on board, properly charged and the correct type for fires which may occur on a boat. Encourage students to learn how to operate a fire extinguisher.
 7. WATER SKIER IN WATER - The popular sport of waterskiing can be dangerous if the following safety practices aren't followed. Safe waterskiing requires at least three people which include the skier, the boat operator, and an observer who is at least 12 years of age. The boat operators should stay a reasonable distance from swimmers, fishermen, and shoreline areas. The observer should constantly keep an eye on the skier. If you fall while skiing, hold the tip of one of your skis up to allow other boats to see you easily.
 8. STORM CLOUD - Always check the weather forecast before heading out in a boat and check local updates often while on the lake. Watch for signs of changing weather. Storms can come up suddenly causing danger from high winds, hail, and lightning. If you see storm clouds gathering (especially in the West), head toward shore quickly. Don't wait until the storm actually begins to seek shelter!
 9. OVERLOADED BOAT - Explain that an overloaded boat is a dangerous boat because it loses buoyancy and stability, causing it to capsize easily. Students can check the capacity plate of boats they are in to determine load limits.
 10. ALCOHOL - Emphasize to students that alcohol and water sports should not be mixed. Alcohol slows reaction time and is involved in more than half of the serious boating accidents. It is also a major factor in many drownings.
 11. HELP POSITION - Remind students to assume this body position if they would accidentally fall into cold water. This position conserves body heat and delays the effects of hypothermia.
 12. BEACH BALL - Review the various items that can be thrown in the water to help someone float. (Examples include a beach ball, cooler, inner tube). Re-emphasize the rule of reach, throw, row, but don't go !
 13. FLOATING LOG - Students should keep a lookout for floating logs or other hazards and inform the driver of the boat if they see any hazards. This is especially true in areas of a lake where timber has been left for fish habitat. These areas should be approached at a slow speed.
 14. SMALL CRAFT WARNING FLAG - If students are at a lake and see a red flag being flown at the tower, it means that a small craft advisory is in effect and boats should stay off the main lake. However, it is the boaters responsibility to recognize wind conditions or incoming storms which might make boating hazardous.
 15. BOAT - Remind students that when in a boat they should ask the boat driver to show them the basics of operating the boat in case of an emergency. Especially note where the on/off switch is located in case someone falls overboard and you need to stop.
 16. UNDERWATER STUMP - Emphasize to the students to always check the water before they dive in for tree stumps, rocks, or other underwater hazards. Water that was deep enough to safely dive into a week ago may now be too shallow due to a lower lake level.
- SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Bingo Cards, Picture Cards, game markers, and water safety decals.